THE Reconstructionist

Volume XI June 1, 1945 Sivan 20, 5705 No. 8

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RECONSTRUCTIONISM — A METHOD OF LIVING IN TWO CIVILIZATIONS
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REALITIES AND VALUES

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WITH ALL DUE MODESTY

From somewhere in the Pacific:

To the younger Jews whom I know, it is coming to be increasingly true that your organization and its program is the only satisfying one. In fact, it is a real emotional experience to come upon one of your pamphlets for the first time, as if, after a long period of soul and mind searching, one has suddenly come upon the answer.

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EDITORIALS

JEWISH ISSUES AT SAN FRANCISCO

THE fog that had enveloped Jewish issues at the San Francisco Conference has lifted. As the intentions of the various national delegations became clearer, it was possible for our Jewish leaders to take their bearings and to steer a course that reckoned with shoals and reefs and adverse currents.

Jewish interest has centered on two main objectives: (1) the adoption and implementation of a Bill of Human Rights, and (2) the formulation of a statement on trusteeship that would make possible the realization of Jewish aspirations for reconstituting Palestine as a Jewish Commonwealth.

The principle of the Bill of Rights has been agreed upon by the big powers and will, no doubt, be concurred in by the smaller ones. But no definite Bill of Rights has been formulated. Its formulation has been left to a Commission on Human Rights which is to function as a sort of subcommittee of the Social and Economic Council. Secretary of State Stettinius hailed the proposal for the establishment of this commission as a "far-reaching step because it would pledge the members of the world organization to cooperate effectively in promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms for all individuals and peoples regardless of race, language, religion or sex." On the basis of sad experience, we Jews cannot be over-sanguine about the far-reaching effect of the pledges of nations to oppressed national, racial, or religious minorities. Nevertheless one may hope that the projected Commission on Human Rights will exert a favorable educational influence. It will at least keep the fight against anti-Semitism and other similar infractions of human rights on the agenda of world affairs.

With reference to Jewish rights in respect to Palestine, the representatives of the Jewish Agency, in collaboration with those of the American Jewish Conference, the World Jewish Congress, the British Board of Jewish Deputies and other allied Jewish organizations, presented the following five-point program, the significance of which we shall endeavor to interpret:

"1. Include in the chapter of the charter . . . dealing with international trusteeship a clause designed to preserve Jewish rights acquired under the mandate system of the League of Nations." This is obviously designed to maintain the rights which the White Paper abrogated, the right to free Jewish migration

to Palestine and purchase of land in Palestine, as well as all other rights under the Mandate.

"2. Center responsibility for the transfer of League of Nations mandates to the authority of the United Nations in the hands of permanent members of the Security Council. . . ." This is apparently motivated by the desire to make impossible a situation in which any of the Arab states might pass on questions of trusteeship for Palestine. Not that the Jewish Agency wants to curb the power of the Arab states to advance their own legitimate interests; but, since those states do not recognize Jewish rights internationally sanctioned by the League of Nations, it would be unjust were they to sit on any committees that dealt with the implementation of those rights.

"3. Define the beneficiaries of the trusteeship system so as to take into account the rights of the Jewish people as a whole to Jewish immigration and settlement in Palestine." This is important because the Palestine Mandate is unique in recognizing the right of a non-resident people to colonize its ancestral homeland. It was, therefore, necessary to forestall the danger that, in a general statement on trusteeship which does not mention specific areas, this unique feature of the Palestine situation might be overlooked and our people's right to its national home be thus imperilled.

"4. Qualify provision for non-discrimination or the 'open door' in regard to trusteeship areas by imposing requirements of reciprocity." As at present interpreted, the policy of the "open door" forbids Palestine from imposing a tariff on goods from Great Britain but permits Great Britain to impose a tariff on goods from Palestine. Our leaders want the "open door" to swing both ways.

"5. Vest the General Assembly and the Social and Economic Council with power sufficient to enable them to carry out their supervisory function in regard to trusteeship areas." This is pointed directly at the original British proposals on trusteeship, which required the administering power to report only on economic questions, not on political, and only to the Commission on Social and Economic Problems, not to the Security Council or the General Assembly. The British government evidently wanted to avoid a repetition of the embarrassing situation in which it found itself when the Mandates Commission of the League condemned the White Paper as a breach of the Mandate. By the same token, our Jewish representation wanted to emphasize the need of holding the administering power responsible to the international organization.

How have these Jewish demands fared in the text drafted by the special committee on trusteeship?

Points (1) and (3) are covered by the provision which reads: "Except as may be agreed upon in individual trusteeship arrangements . . . nothing in this chapter should be construed in and of itself to alter in any manner the rights of any state or any peoples in any territory." The inclusion of the words "or any peoples" gives status to the rights of the Jewish people under international law although Jewry does not constitute a national state.

Point (2) seems to have been rejected. The draft recommends instead that "the function of the organization with regard to trusteeship arrangements for all areas not designated as strategic should be exercised by the general assembly." For strategic areas, it would be exercised by the Security Council. Whether Palestine, in whole or in part, will or will not be declared a strategic area remains to be seen.

A basis for the satisfaction of point (4) is indicated in the passage which states as an objective of the trusteeship system, "equal treatment in social, economic and commercial matters for all members of the United Nations," but adds that this must be done without prejudice to the promotion "of the political, economic and social advancement of trust territories and their inhabitants."

Point (5) is taken care of by the provision empowering the General Assembly and, under its authority, the Trusteeship Council, "to consider reports submitted by the administering state, to make periodic visits to the respective territories at times agreed upon with the administering state, and to take other action in conformity with the trusteeship arrangements." This clause invests the Trusteeship Council with the authority which, under the League of Nations Covenant, was exercised by the Mandates Commission, plus the additional authority to investigate conditions on the spot.

To sum up the situation: It is clear that, with respect to the defense of Jewish rights in the diaspora, the creation of the Commission on Human Rights insures that the problem will at least be a matter of continued international concern. With respects to Jewish rights concerning Palestine, though these have not been explicitly confirmed, neither have they been denied. The misgivings of those who feared that we might be confronted by some international action which would preclude the realization of Zionist aims have not been fulfilled. The international machinery by which we shall have to seek the attainment of our political objectives is being created. We are given an address to which to apply for world-endorsement of our aims. That should enable the Zionist organization, now that the fog has lifted, to proceed under full steam.

THE DECLINE IN REALISM

OBSERVERS at San Francisco have reported that, since V-E Day, a marked decline in collective idealism has been apparent. Instead of the broad world view, nationalistic interests have operated. Delegates are now more prone to jockey for position, to engage in "horse trading," bickering and quibbling. The implied conclusion is that nations and individuals are likely to go "all-out" for a common cause when their interests are directly affected, but that they are still human, and therefore cannot easily be expected to maintain a high level of altruism and generosity.

This diagnosis of the prevailing sentiment in San Francisco, and elsewhere, is only half correct. It is indeed true that frail human beings cannot, as a rule, live on the exalted plane of selflessness for long. Under the stress of emergency, men will outdo themselves in acts of self-sacrifice and in attitudes of fraternal devotion. But each climax produces its anti-climax, and men have a tendency to lapse back into their accustomed narrowness.

Nevertheless, in dealing with the international problem under consideration, it would be a mistake to take the lenient view, to think of Dumbarton Oaks, or Bretton Woods, or international cooperation under any similar scheme, in terms of "idealism." Because idealism, as popularly understood, generally connotes a kind of "plus," an act or attitude beyond the expected line of duty, it is regarded as a luxury in human relations in which only the more fortunate can indulge, which fools and dreamers habitually practice because they do not know the "realities" of life. The experienced student of human affairs simply does not expect persons or nations to be idealistic, unless they are congenital "suckers."

This is a most unfortunate analysis of

the problem, especially at this juncture in world history, because everyone should know (it has cost us millions in lives and billions in money to learn this elementary truth) that what generally goes under the name of idealism is nothing more nor less than plain, hard-headed, practical realism; that international cooperation, in political and economic affairs, is not a luxury. It is like air; without it, we cannot live. The "sucker" is really the one who permits himself to die because he has not the sense to realize that life for one depends on life for all.

The real difference beween those who understand our world and those who do not is not that between the idealist and the realist; it is the difference between the near-sighted and the far-sighted. The near-sighted are those who recognize a danger only when it stalks right up to them; the far-sighted spot dangers beyond the horizon. The man who provides against old age and sickness is not being idealistic when he forgoes the momentary pleasure; he is simply being sensible and realistic. The nation that reduces its tariff against foreign manufacture is not being idealistic; it is merely looking ahead and understanding that, without purchasing power, foreign people cannot buy its commodities. When a nation pledges to contribute men and material to stop an aggressor ten thousand miles away, it is not being idealistic; it is preventing little troubles from becoming big troubles.

We are witnessing in San Francisco and elsewhere not a decline in idealism, but in realism, a progressive myopia induced by the silent guns, the idle planes and the liberation of prisoners in Europe. The end of immediate danger creates the illusion that remote dangers do not exist.

All of this does not mean to imply that the world can get along on enlightened self-interest alone, that "realism" by itself will save it. For there are times when brotherhood and cooperation do not produce their inevitable results quickly, when men are confused and do not clearly discern the moral causality in human affairs, and doubt begins to gnaw. Without a profound idealism to carry them across such crises, men might indeed lose faith in the efficacy of justice and love. For those dark moments when violence *seems* to prosper and falsehood *seems* to establish itself, we all need more than realism. But today, that faith has been vindicated in the downfall of the tyrants. Our generation would be committing a double sin—a sin against realism *and* faith—if it permitted the statesmen of the world to forget so quickly the enduring lesson of this epic war.

WHAT TO DO ABOUT INTERMARRIAGE

THE swift, destructive eruption of a volcano commands instant attention and concern. The process of soil erosion, slow, ever-present and hence undramatic, goes almost unnoticed. Similarly the losses suffered by Jewry as a result of Nazi brutality are shockingly obvious, but the losses to the Jewish population resulting from intermarriage receive little attention. Nevertheless, they are evidence of a process of attrition which, if not checked, would mean the ultimate annihilation of the Jewish people.

The war has given the drift to intermarriage a tremendous impetus. In war time there is a general slackening of the social controls that govern personal behavior. Home influences are weakened by the long, enforced absence of servicemen from their homes. All this makes for the breakdown of the inhibitions that deter one from intermarriage.

A recent survey conducted among a group of Jewish students at Yale Uni-

versity revealed that no less than 47 per cent of those answering the questionnaire admitted that they had no scruples against intermarriage; that is to say, they would not insist upon the conversion to Judaism of the non-Jewish partner to the marriage. Allowing for every interpretation that might heavily discount the conclusive nature of the poll, we are still left with a result startling enough to stimulate all who are concerned with Jewish survival to take appropriate remedial action.

Just such action was recently taken by the United Synagogue of Great Britain. Faced with an alarming increase in intermarriage it promulgated a series of enactments on the subject. Any Jew married to a non-Jew may not, according to the regulations, hold office in a synagogue, despite his present membership therein. Further, any Jew who marries outside the faith thereby disqualifies himself from joining a congregation. A comprehensive program to meet the situation would have to culminate in community enactments that would reflect the informed positive Jewish public opinion on the question of intermarriage.

The first step, however, would have to be the formulation of an attitude. That is a task which, in the first instance, ought seriously concern our rabbinical organizations. What is needed is a complete cogent statement setting forth the grounds of our opposition to intermarriage. The statement must address itself to the outlook of the young Jew whose principal life motivations are found in the values of individualism sedulously inculcated by contemporary American culture. It must reckon with the charge of "segregation" and with the whole problem of social relationships between young Jewish men and women and their non-Jewish neighbors. Such a pronouncement ought become one of the basic guides in the formulation of a curriculum for Jewish education. At present, the subject is not even touched tangentially in our religious schools. But not even the most cogent statement, widely utilized in the education of young people, can suffice to overcome the powerful social forces in American life that make for intermarriage. Hence, a realistic attitude toward the problem must reckon with the whole question of conversion.

Let this point be made at once: a good proportion of intermarriages would be retrieved for Judaism and the Jewish people if we had an articulate and effectively realized program of conversion. What is the situation on this score at the moment? In keeping with the traditional *halakah* which disqualifies a would-be proselyte who is motivated by the desire to marry a Jew or Jewess, many Orthodox and a few Conservative rabbis refuse to countenance such conversions. The person seeking conversion then applies to a rabbi for whom that is the merest formality. Is it any wonder then that, in the popular mind, the whole conversion process is regarded as a hypocritical fraud?

This prevailing attitude will not be dispelled until proper standards are set and enforced by our rabbinical organizations. A more positive attitude taken by rabbis toward conversion is bound ultimately to affect the thinking of the layman. In our day, a would-be proselyte should be regarded primarily as one who seeks the status of membership in the Jewish people. That membership entails for him, as it does for one who is born a Jew, acceptance of the religious civilization of the Jewish people. The status of membership can only be conferred by the community through its representatives. An integral part of the conversion ceremony ought therefore consist of an official welcome by leading laymen of the

community, perhaps, by a *minyan*. The rabbi as the teacher is, of course, the proper person to acquaint the prospective proselyte with the salient features of Judaism and to interpret the whole conversion process.

But whatever may be done to encourage the conversion to Judaism of the Gentile party to a mixed marriage does not obviate the need for action by the Jewish community to discountenance mixed marriages without conversion. To insure its own future integrity, the Jewish community has no recourse but to adopt a series of regulations barring from all positions of control and influence Jews who have married outside the faith. He who has relinquished his stake in the future of the Jewish people can claim no share in shaping that future. Such regulations should come not as rabbinic enactments but as the official policy to be adopted by all organizations committed to Jewish survival. Only in this way will the Jewish community be put on record as definitely opposing intermarriage. Only such action will make the transgressor feel that he offends aaginst the publicly expressed conscience of his contemporary community and not merely, as he would like to believe, against an ancient meaningless tabu maintained by the rabbinate as a priestly caste.

REALITIES AND VALUES

NOW THAT THE FIGHTING IS over in Europe we have access to information on the extent of the tragic losses suffered by our people at the hands of the Nazis. The estimated number of Jewish dead ranges from four to five million. But along with news of these frightful losses comes news of individual Jewish personalities who seem almost miraculously to have escaped death. We are profoundly grateful for each such "brand plucked from the fire"; for Leon Blum, ex-premier of France, loyal Jew and loyal Frenchman, who gave the French people a "new deal" before the fascist minded elements in French politics betrayed their country; for David Guzik, an agent of the Joint Distribution Committee in Poland who had been given up for dead because, rather than return to the safety of America, he chose to conduct underground rescue work after the German occupation; for Dr. Leo Baeck, scholarly German rabbi and head of the National Representation of German Jewry, who had rejected opportunities to go into exile, because he felt that his people needed him, although he was well-aware that he would land in a German concentration camp. Nor can we fail to register our gratitude for the escape of that doughty "defender of the faith" against Nazism, Pastor Martin Niemoeller.

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ROUMANIAN ANTI-SEMITISM has always been notorious for finding ways of attacking Jews even when it could not do so openly. But never did it direct a more fantastic charge against a Jewish leader than that which has been published in the Roumanian press against Dr. William Filderman, president of the Union of Roumanian Jews at the time of the Nazi conquest. He is accused of collaboration with the pro-Nazi government of General Antonescu, the very man responsible for having deported him to a concentration camp in Transnistria only a year and a half ago. The ominous aspect of the affair which cries for investigation is that he has actually been arraigned by the military government set up by the "liberating" Russian army on an obviously trumped-up charge of anti-Soviet propaganda.

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REPRESENTATIVE CHESTER H. Cross recently expressed "amazement" in

a speech in the House over the fact that "for fear of offending some of the delegates of the various nations of the world represented there" the sessions of the San Francisco Conference were not opened by prayer. "Our religion must mean little to us," he said, "when we have to abandon it at a time like this because strangers are in our midst." We should like to call the worthy Representative's attention to certain facts that he apparently overlooks. One is that a time was reserved for silent meditation or prayer. Is his God like Baal, whose worshipers Elijah taunted, urging them to shout louder to attract their god's attention? Another fact which he ignored is that, among the nations represented were Moslem states, and China with its Confucianists, Buddhists, Taoists and that some of the representatives of those nations might not be as moved by prayers couched in the idiom of another faith and culture as by one expressing their own faith. To defer to other religions than one's own or those of one's fellow citizens is not to abandon one's own religion. One of the demands of true religion is to "walk *humbly* with our God."

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IT IS BECOMING MORE AND more difficult for the Jew who does not want to make the effort necessary to acquire a Jewish culture, to find convenient excuses for rationalizing his desire to escape from it. A generation ago he might have given the excuse that there was really very little written in the English language about Jews and Judaism which was worth reading. That is no longer true, one could get quite a Jewish self-education from the books published by the Jewish Publication Society alone. Then there is the excuse that it is hard for the ordinary layman to know just what to read, what would interest him. But along comes the Jewish Book Council and publishes a very readable bi-monthly bulletin, *In Jewish Bookland,* which serves as an excellent guide to the Jew who wants to get a preview of good Jewish books. We suppose that now the only excuse left will be the tiredness of the tired businessman, which only a late session at pinochle can relieve.

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THE IDEA THAT TORAH should come from Zion is no new one. But if one combines that idea with the thought that *"Im en kemah en torah"* ("If there is no food there can be no Torah") it becomes very appropriate that Palestine should also make a contribution of *kemah* to the world. And that is what it is doing today. Jewish experience in increasing the productivity of areas in Palestine hitherto considered incapable of producing food is commanding the attention of people in other lands. In a bulletin issued by the Palestine Economic Bureau of the Z.O.A. we read of an inquiry sent to it by a non-Jewish farmer in Texas. He had heard over the radio the story of how land in the neighborhood of the Dead Sea had been made productive by washing the salt out of it, and, owning similar land in Texas, he wanted to know about the method used. He got his information.

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ONE OF THE COMMON PRACtices of rabbis interested in interdenominational goodwill is to exchange pulpits with Christian ministers. The propriety of the practice is challenged in an item quoted from the *London Jewish Chronicle* by the "Trend of Events" news-letter of May 11th. It reads in part: "Every denomination has the religious duty fully to express itself in worship. It is not reasonable to ask a Christian, in any form of divine worship, to omit all that gives his faith it

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Reconstructionism—A Method of Living in Two Civilizations *

By MORDECAI M. KAPLAN

WHAT this gathering means to the progress of the Reconstructionist movement may perhaps be best illustrated by something I recall from my boyhood years. When my parents established themselves in this country, they managed to do so without being involved, for a very obvious reason, in the servant problem. I was then expected to do some chores in the house. The chore I loved most was building a fire in the coal stove. I would crumple together some old newspapers and place them at the bottom of the grate. On top I would put seven or eight pieces of wood. After applying the match to the newspapers, I would wait till the flame caught on to the wood. When I was sure that the fire was in full blast, I would add a small shovel or two of hard coals. If every step in the process was properly timed, more coal could be added to assure a steady fire.

Reconstructionism has been passing through stages similar to those of this fire-building process. The ten years of the Reconstructionist magazine may be said to represent the paper stage of the movement. At first, a few ardently disposed people — the kind who are, so to say, spiritually inflammable — caught on to the idea. They have by this time transmitted it to sufficiently large numbers of those who, if they would only develop sufficient heat, could give the idea permanence.

Ten Years of Reconstructionism

Some one has said that people may be divided into three groups: conformists, rebels and reconstructionists. I have a feeling that most of you are neither conformists, nor rebels. You must, accordingly, be at least potential Reconstructionists. You are, therefore, entitled to know how far ten years' experience in the Jewish Reconstructionist movement has helped to clarify its aims and to identify the most effective means of advancing them.

Before answering this question, however, I deem it necessary to plead earnestly against the natural but misleading tendency to judge our movement by those who have launched it, or by some of the things it has so far accomplished. The Reconstructionist movement is a living energy. The disparate embodiments of a living energy can never convey the actual feel of it. It is necessary to place oneself mentally, as William James phrases it, "inside of the living moving active thickness of it." Such is the intuitive insight which those of us who have launched the Reconstructionist movement ask of those who come to it with an open mind and are genuinely interested in knowing what it is all about. Anything less than such insight is likely to convey only a caricature notion of the movement.

However much importance we attach to our platform or our philosophy, to our magazine or our pamphlets, to our New Haggadah or our new Sabbath Prayer Book, or to whatever other books and undertakings are in the offing, we would not have the movement itself judged by that literary output. It is certainly fair to appraise our efforts from the standpoint of their success in articulating the aims of the movement and in implementing it. In

* Address delivered at the Tenth Anniversary Dinner of THE RECONSTRUCTIONIST.

fact, we anticipate the verdict of such appraisal by confessing that we are far from satisfied with what we have done, or even with the very best we might do. We know our limitations. We are keenly aware of the discrepancy between them and the magnitude of the cause we venture to promulgate. Reconstructionism, even more than Zionism, needs the burning zeal of a Herzl and the inspired eloquence of a Nordau, the iron will of an Ussishkin and the statesmanship of a Weizmann. If, despite our lacking all these qualifications, we started the Reconstructionist movement, it is because we have learned from Hillel, that, when great men are not to be found, lesser men should shoulder the responsibility for what has to be done.

Reconstructionism is as little of an "ism" as is Judaism itself. It is an attempt to give a new direction to that vital impetus which has kept the Jewish people alive through the centuries. That vital impetus has more than once, in the course of our history, met with resistance which threatened to overwhelm it. But each time it was so challenged, it developed new strength. From being merely a generative force, the Jewish will to live transformed itself into a resurrectional and regenerative power. The very dangers which at present threaten Jewish life from without and from within have aroused in some Jews the invincible resolve to have the Jewish people go on living and to help it recover its place among the history-making peoples. The one popular manifestation in our day of that resolve is Zionism. But Zionism is preoccupied with the reclamation of Palestine as a homeland for those who want to go there. It can give little thought to those of our people whose permanent home is destined to be anywhere but Palestine.

What, indeed, will become of us Jews in the diaspora? Some look forward to the future of Jewish life in the diaspora as a matter of course. Others are convinced that all Jewish life outside Palestine is bound to disappear. The truth is that the future of our people in the diaspora is unpredictable, because it depends less upon outward circumstances than upon the will of the Jews themselves. What Herzl said about the future of Palestine is equally true of the future of the diaspora Jewry: "If you want it, it is no legend." Who then can foretell whether our people will strive persistently and intensively enough to enable Jewish life to take root here and elsewhere? The trouble with most of us is that in evaluating the present condition of diaspora Judaism, we either minimize or exaggerate the forces of disintegration. Both of these tendencies lead to inaction, one because of blind faith, the other because of blind despair.

Such inaction is unbearable to those of us who are in the grip of an overmastering will to Jewish renaissance. That will is not some vague sentimental nostalgia. It expresses itself in open-eyed awareness of the inner crisis of Jewish life and in a readiness to go to the limit of what can possibly be done to negotiate that crisis safely. Reconstructionism is the very antithesis of inertia. The tendency to carry on all Jewish activities, even religious and educational, according to established routine without continually rethinking and revising aims and methods is part of a deadening inertia which Reconstructionism is striving to have our people overcome.

The Need for a Metamorphosis Of Judaism

As a result of rethinking the very nature of Judaism, we Reconstructionists have come to realize that Judaism is not merely a religion but a religious civiliza-

tion. With that as a major premise, we have discovered that the decisive factor in the present inner crisis of Jewish life is the necessity of having to live simultaneously in two civilizations. The two civilizations are Judaism and Americanism in this country, or Judaism and some other modern civilization in other countries. We are fully aware of the troublesome implications of this new and unprecedented necessity. We also sense that only the most strenuous exertions will enable the Jewish people to meet that necessity successfully.

The leading spokesmen of Jewry, during the last century-and-a-half, have somehow failed to grasp the cataclysmic character of the changes which our people has had to undergo in order to live in two civilizations. That failure is largely responsible for the state of bewilderment in which most of our people find themselves today, a bewilderment that spells ignorance, confusion, self-hate and self-pity. By and large, the average Jew is empty of all ideas about Judaism. One of our army chaplains put the matter pointedly when he wrote of the many Jews he met in the armed forces: "It is not that the men have turned their backs on Judaism; they have never faced it." The way altogether too many of our people feel about Jewish life may best be described, in the words of "Old Man River," as "tired of livin' and fear'd of dyin'."

So long, however, as despite this heartbreaking condition of our people's inner life, some of us still retain that vital impetus which has more than once brought resurrection to our people, there is hope. But if that hope is to bear fruit, we must be prepared to undergo an inner transformation which is tantamount to metamorphosis.

Metamorphosis of living creatures is a well-known phenomenon. In contrast with the gradual and imperceptible process of evolution by which one type of creature evolves into another in the course of numberless generations, nature sometimes brings about complete changes of structure and function in the same creature. The caterpillar, for example, which crawls slowly on the leaves of the tree is transformed into the butterfly which flies about from flower to flower to gather its food. In such creatures, life seems to be too impatient of evolution's slow course. Driven by some overpowering creative urge, life leaps far ahead of where it happens to be. The result is a new type of being, but with the same continuing life.

We would do well to read the meaning of human development in the light of this extraordinary phenomenon in nature. Physically, man is subject to the slow process of evolution which is almost imperceptible except in terms of geological periods. But mentally and spiritually, man finds evolution too slow. Ever since he has reached the state of self-awareness, he has been yearning to become a higher type of being. It has somehow fallen to our lot as a people to herald and incarnate this principle of human metamorphosis. With our messianic ideal we have awakened in the human heart that discontent which is the forerunner of a regenerated humanity.

In the light of this interpretation of human history and of Israel's place in the world, the circumstances which have led to the necessity of our living in two civilizations are part of the metamorphosis which the human race is undergoing at the present time. This necessity which has given rise to the crisis in Jewish existence is a challenge to the Jewish people. It compels the Jewish people to reconstitute itself into a different kind of a nation from that which it was in the past. In order to survive as a corporate

entity, Jews must now transform themselves into an amphibious society, partly a nation in the accepted sense of the term, living in its own land where it can achieve the full measure of nationhood, and partly a people which can integrate itself with other nations in other lands, without losing its own individuality. From the standpoint of nationhood, as understood and lived in a world in which international wars are regarded as inevitable, this may seem impossible. Metamorphose your world, however, by abolishing wars, and this amphibious society, which contemporary events are compelling the Jews to achieve, will come to be entirely natural and normal.

But you will say, we are still living in a world of belligerent nations. The answer is: Jews must accept their destiny of having to foreshadow what mankind will become. Each era has its own way of shaping that destiny. Our era's definition of that destiny is that Jews must retrieve the land of their origin as the center of their historic civilization and must learn to live in two civilizations everywhere else.

The Twofold Program of Reconstructionism

Impelled by this conception of the present crisis in Judaism, Reconstructionism has formulated a two-fold program for Jewish life: (1) an over-all or plenary program, and (2) a fractional program. The over-all program is intended to embrace all Jews, regardless of affiliation or rationale, to whom the renaissance of the Jewish people is a matter of deep concern. The fractional program is intended for that sector of our people which consists of men and women who want to make the most of Jewish life but who do not find any of the current formulation of Judaism intellectually or spiritually acceptable.

In its over-all program, Reconstructionism aims at (1) the replenishment of the substance of Jewish living, and (2) the reorganization of the social structure of Jewry.

Replenishing the Jewish Population of the World

Never has it been as essential as it is today to stress the need of replenishing the bodily as well as the spiritual substance of our Jewish people. Most of us labor under the illusion that the substance of Jewish life is still intact. One is reminded of a story which came out of the first London blitz. A house which belonged to an old woman was shattered by bombs. All that was left of the house was a jagged frontage sticking up in a flattened street. But the old woman continued to turn up every morning and to scrub the door-step of her house, as had been her habit for many years. We, too, go on with our various Jewish undertakings, as though there were a House of Israel, when virtually all that is left of it is merely a jagged frontage.

The change in the status of the Jews from that of aliens to that of citizens, a change which has been going on during the last century-and-a-half, has meant giving up a mode of life based on one civilization and adopting a mode of life based on two civilizations. This transition could not take place without considerable loss of Jewish population. Many are unequal to the shock which accompanies so radical a change in one's way of life. For a time, however, such losses were more than made up by the increases through the migration of Jews to countries where the frontier of economic opportunity was still open. But with the stoppage of immigration soon after World War I, and with the isolation of Russian Jewry, a severe decline of the Jewish population set in. In recent years we

have sustained further devastating losses. The atrocities and the carnage committed by the Nazis have bereft us of more than one-third of our entire population.

Most nations, whether great or small, study ways and means of augmenting their numbers. Among us Jews this topic is never aired, as though we had little to fear from a death rate which exceeds the birth rate. We dare not, however, continue this ostrich policy. From the standpoint of actual survival of the Jewish people, the further evasion of this problem is inexcusable. It is absurd to evince a concern merely for the moral and spiritual aspects of Jewish life, while we do nothing to counteract the rapid depletion of the number of Jews in the world. The physical replenishment of our people must, accordingly, be among the first items on our agenda. That very approach to the inner problem of Jewish life would help us achieve a realistic and fruitful sense of Jewish values.

Replenishing Jewish Ethics and Cultural Values

We are on more familiar ground, however, when we call to mind the need for replenishing the stock of Jewish cultural and ethical values. That stock has run low as a result of the fact that our life has its center of gravity in the civilization of the country of which we are citizens. This means two things: First, we derive from the general environment whatever ethical standards we need for the appraisal of our own conduct and that of others. Likewise, we find in the enormous cultural wealth of the world about us enough poetry, music and art for the deepest feelings to which we attach an abiding value. Secondly, there is a falling off in the demand for any specifically Jewish definition of rights and wrongs, or for any uniquely Jewish interpretation of life's meaning through arts or letters. As a further result, Jewish thinkers and artists seldom devote any of their talents to the improvement or enrichment of Jewish life.

It should hardly be necessary to labor the point that it is entirely possible to create Jewish values without becoming parochial. The fostering of ethical sensitivity through the varied applications of the stimulus of *kiddush ha-shem* would certainly not set us apart from our neighbors. The moral indignation of the Prophets and the Psalmists' denunciation of evil-doers are shared by all the world. Henri Bergson's reputation as a philosopher did not at all require that he misunderstand and misinterpret Judaism. Felix Adler would have been no less esteemed as an ethical teacher, had he sought to alleviate the tragedy of his own people. As for the arts, Ernest Bloch's opening up new horizons in the music of Jewish religious worship, could not but enlarge the scope of his creativity. Young Leonard Bernstein's symphony, "Jeremiah," has not prevented him from writing the music of "On the Town." Chagall's place among the masters of modern art is secure, though he chose Jewish life as the medium through which to express his individual style.

We are in urgent need of a great manifold of cultural values that will render Jewish life significant and interesting without involving us in controversial issues. We are in urgent need of a Jewish public opinion that will serve as an incentive to the articulation and functioning of high ethical ideals. If we Jews want to retain our group individuality, we must so replenish our resources of mind and spirit as to render living in two civilizations a means to their mutual enrichment.

Reorganizing the Social Structure of Jewry

No less important than the replenish-

ment of Jewish life both physical and spiritual is the reorganization of the social structure of our people as a corporate entity. Before the emancipation, Jews could satisfy only through Jewish nationhood the basic human need of belonging. So long as Jews lived only in and by their own civilization, they had to retain the status of a nation in exile, and to maintain that status through their local communities. Each local community or Kehillah was a link that connected every Jew with the rest of the Jewish nation. Every Jew had to belong to his local Kehillah. Acceptance of civic rights and responsibilities, however, has put an end to the status of the Jews as a nation in exile. With the termination of that status, affiliation with Jewish group life has come to be entirely optional.

Reconstructionism accepts the integration of the Jews into the body politic of other nations as ultimate. To characterize Reconstructionism as an attempt to institute a kind of voluntary ghetto is nothing less than slander. Reconstructionism merely urges that the process of integration should take place in keeping with the spirit of democracy and not with that of totalitarianism. Such integration, therefore, must *not* preclude either the reclamation of Eretz Yisrael or the establishment of organic Jewish communities in the diaspora. Both are indispensable to Jewish renaissance.

The reclamation of Eretz Yisrael, from the standpoint of Jewish status, is essential as the only rallying point of Jewish unity. With the inevitable dissolution of uniformity in religious belief and practice as a bond to unite all Jews, what else besides Eretz Yisrael can keep alive among them a sense of a common past and a common destiny? To disown Eretz Yisrael is to disown Yisrael. No amount of sophistry can reconcile the belief in a future for Judaism with a complacent attitude toward the homelessness of the Jewish people.

But the unity generated by a common devotion to Eretz Yisrael is apt to remain an abstract idea, and without any influence on our inner life. It must be mediated for us through locally functioning Jewish communities. Each local community must include all Jews within a given area, who accept their Jewish heritage, and are willing to transmit it to their children. Differences in ideology or in mode of life must not be permitted to divide Jews. All who wish to be known as Jews must learn to cooperate in the effort to render Jewish life inherently creative and worthwhile. Having to live in two civilizations can teach us Jews to set an example in that cooperative pluralism which is the only workable basis of democracy.

Organic Jewish community must not be conceived merely as an agency to coordinate the various activities now being carried on by Jews. It must be nothing less than an instrument of Jewish revival and growth. It must enable every Jew without distinction of nativity, class or creedal adherence, to count on the material and moral support of his fellow-Jews. This organic community the synagogue should be the first to promulgate and the last to claim that it can by itself achieve. The synagogue without the social, cultural and Zionist agencies is a soul without a body. Those agencies without the synagogue are a body without a soul.

The Fractional Program of Reconstructionism

How to live in two civilizations is not merely a question of preventing the majority civilization from so absorbing the life of the Jew as to leave him no occasion or energy for expressing himself as a Jew. There is another, and, in a sense, an even more complicated problem. As-

suming that, through replenishment and reorganization, we have succeeded in saving Jewish life from being completely absorbed by the environment, what is to assure us that we can harmonize our own historic civilization with that of our neighbors? To be sure, the philosophies and programs of Orthodoxy, Reform, Conservatism, and the Secularist version of Judaism are intended to help the Jew harmonize the two civilizations in which he is henceforth destined to live. But what is to become of the large number of earnest men and women who, despite their eagerness to make the most of their Jewish heritage, do not find any of those versions of Judaism adequate? Shall they be condemned or ignored, because they refuse to contort themselves into affirming what their entire being denies? What can be more reasonable than to provide some new orientation for those among our people who are disoriented. Thus arose the Reconstructionist program which is intended for that sector of devoted Jews who cannot accept any of the current versions of Judaism. Subscribing to this fractional program, however, does not exempt anyone from cooperating with the rest of Jewry in the over-all program of replenishing Jewish life and reorganizing its social structure.

The fractional program of Reconstructionism is an attempt to integrate the two civilizations in which Jews have to live into one universe of thought and action, by synthesizing the traditional world outlook of the Jewish civilization with the naturalism and the democracy of western civilization. That synthesis calls for nothing less than a reeducation or reorientation in our basic ideas of life.

Harmonizing Jewish Religion With Naturalism

As a result of the inroads which naturalism has made into traditional religion, the Jewish secularists have come to regard religion as dispensable. Their reason for considering religion dispensable derives from a narrow interpretation of both religion and naturalism. They look upon religion merely as the affirmation of supernaturalism, and they regard naturalism as the negation of all cosmic trends which do not fall within the category of mechanical cause and effect. Jews who deny that religion inherently assumes the temporary suspension of the laws of nature, or that nature itself must be regarded as devoid of all consciousness and purpose, cannot subscribe to a secularist Judaism.

On the other hand, the synagogue groups have so far not been able to make peace with naturalism. Naturalism implies that the normal processes of cause and effect cannot be interfered with by prayer or by human conduct however worthy. In traditional religion, however, the element of miracle or suspension of natural law is treated as not only possible, but as the principal manifestation of the divine. It is on this that Orthodoxy rests its case. The Historical or Conservative group has assumed naturalism in its treatment of post-biblical Judaism, but has resisted it in the interpretations of the biblical records, particularly the Pentateuch.

This is not a question merely for theologians. It is of decisive significance when we want to train our children to be Jews. It seems impossible for our children even in the best of our religious or Hebrew schools to get a picturable, and not merely a half-legendary idea, of how the Jewish people and its religion arose. We Jews can least afford to come under the cynical definition of a nation as "a society united by a common error as to its origin." The fact that, after more than a century of modern Jewish scholarship, we are still without a scientifically plausible recon-

struction of the first thousand years of our existence as a people, the years in which our people was at the height of its creativity, is bound to nullify the most progressive methods and skills, and the most efficient organizational plans in Jewish education. We Jews shall never really know what we are, unless we get to know what we were. That can come about only through a consistently scientific, though nonetheless religious, reconstruction of our past.

Another aspect of Jewish life where the failure to come to grips with the realities of the time is costing us dearly, is worship. There undoubtedly are many men and women who want to pray, but who cannot utter prayers which assume beliefs that conflict with their conception of the workings of nature. Shall they be told that the doors of prayer are shut to them? Not to provide them with the forms of worship to which they can heartily subscribe is to be recklessly spendthrift with our human resources. To help them meet their religious needs seems to be a legitimate aim. That also is one of the aims of Reconstructionism in its fractional program.

Democractizing Authority in Jewish Life

An additional synthesis which Reconstructionism is seeking to effect in its fractional program is that of democracy, as the highest achievement of western civilization, with authority, as the basic principle of Jewish tradition. Both Orthodoxy and Conservatism agree that all traditional Jewish laws are equally authoritative for all time, and, though subject to interpretation, can neither be amended nor annulled. A growing number of Jews, however, who see in democracy not merely a particular type of government but an ethical way of life, reject the assumption that laws which have come down from the past must be eternally binding. The ancients are entitled to have a vote but not the right to veto. The American Jew cannot in his capacity as an American demand that laws be continually adjusted to meet life's needs, and in his capacity as a Jew, uphold the authority of the past as irrevocable.

Reform has gone to the extreme of abolishing all Jewish law and reducing Judaism to a system of religious and ethical principles. It has entirely eliminated the law-making prerogative of the Jewish people. This does not constitute a true synthesis of western democracy with Jewish tradition. Such an interpretation of democracy is not likely to promote its inherently ethical purpose of fostering individuality in persons and societies. If the concept of peoplehood, which Reform in its more recent pronouncements seems inclined to favor, is to be taken seriously, it should find expression, to some extent at least, in law and legal institutions. Jewish law, within the limits of state jurisdiction and in the spirit of democratic law-making, must come to life again. This alone would constitute a legitimate synthesis of western democracy with Jewish tradition.

This hastily sketched fractional program of Reconstructionism is intended only for a segment of Jewry. It is not set forth as the only tenable program for Jewry as a whole. Every party or group within a people may claim the right to be heard, but not the right to silence others. The right of silencing others has altogether too long been assumed as essential to religious conviction. To offset this assumption with that of cooperative religious pluralism is itself one of the fundamental aims of the Reconstructionist program, both plenary and fractional.

Implementing Reconstructionism—The Reconstructionist Fellowship

Until recently we Reconstructionists

have had to content ourselves with the spoken and the written word. Impelled by the natural urge to action and by the rabbinic reminder that not *midrash,* preachment, but *maaseh,* action, is all-important, we organized about a year ago the Reconstructionist Fellowship. The purpose of this Fellowship is to mobilize the men and women in Jewish life who are endowed with an extra measure of the will to Jewish renaissance and to have them function in small groups or chapters in their own particular milieux, as a vitalizing factor in their respective communities.

The first care of the members of these chapters should be to strengthen and stimulate one another in their faith in Judaism. They need one another to quicken and deepen, through mutual association, their devotion to the Jewish people and their yearning to have it play once again a beneficent role in the history of mankind. They should begin by helping one another to render their own home atmosphere enchantingly Jewish, through every possible device of ritual observance and cultural creativity. Sabbaths, festivals and all joyous celebrations should serve as occasions to dramatize Jewish values and ideals. If there are children in the home, the interest in their Jewish upbringing should be intensive and fruitful of growth in character and happiness.

Armed with the example of such achievements in their own personal lives, members of a fellowship chapter would then be able to transform all Jewish institutions and organizations with which they are affiliated into instruments of Jewish revival and creativity. They should revolutionize the very motivation of all Jewish activities. With the exception of the synagogue, and sometimes even without that exception, all Jewish undertakings are motivated largely by fear of anti-Semitism. The principal aim of the Reconstructionist Fellowship is to replace that fear by faith in the inherent value of whatever Jews undertake as a group, and by the striving to have their efforts contribute to the enrichment of Jewish life.

Reconstructionism an Assertion of The Jewish Will to Live

In sum, Reconstructionism is the resurgence in the Jewish people of the will to live. Having to live henceforth in two civilizations, the Jewish people is bound to undergo metamorphosis. We have nothing to fear from metamorphosis. That, indeed, is how we began our career as a nation. This seems to be the meaning of the story that God changed the name of "Abram" to "Abraham" and of "Jacob" to "Israel." There may even be a hint of religious metamorphosis in the story that at first God was known by the name of "Shaddai" and later by the four-letter name "YHWH."

The present condition of the Jewish people may well be compared to that of our ancestor Jacob, when, in a state of helplessness, he lay down to sleep in the wilderness at what turned out to be, earth's gate to heaven. Legend has it that, as he slept, the angels ran up and down the great ladder that reached from earth to heaven to see whether there was any resemblance between the image of Jacob which was graven on God's throne and the weak and helpless Jacob who lay on the ground. When they noted the contrast, they started to mock and deride the forlorn fugitive from Esau's wrath. But God could not bear their ridiculing Jacob, and He chased them away. Thus, whenever our own doubts and despairs concerning our Jewish people seem to mock the high ideals concerning Israel which our lawgivers and poets, our prophets and our sages have projected into their conception of God's Kingdom on earth, let us pray that God chase away

those cynical and gloomy thoughts. Let us be heartened by the promise God made to Jacob: "Your descendants shall be as numerous as the dust on the ground; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south, and in you and your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

Education for Jewish Morale

By MORDECAI L. BRILL

> "If the Jewish people is to survive the present spiritual crisis it will have to employ consciously and deliberately the means it has hitherto employed intuitively, whenever its existence was challenged. It's principal means has always been the creation of the appropriate *educational agencies* (italics ours) to transmit its heritage. . . ."
>
> Prof. M. M. Kaplan in a recent address commemorating the 35th anniversary of the Teacher's Institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary.

THE Jewish Chaplain, in contact with a cross section of American Jewish youth is in a strategic position to evaluate the effectiveness of various Jewish educational agencies during the past 25 years or so. At the same time he is, more often than not, a frustrated man, because, even though he has the Jewish community leaders of tomorrow under his tutelage, lack of time and an ever-changing personnel rule out any sustained educational program of a more intensive nature. Even the Chaplains are moved around frequently so that plans and programs are suddenly interrupted. To one thing, however, every Chaplain will testify—the lack of Jewish knowledge, affiliation and loyalties widespread among his men.

Working Against Time

Basically, in all our Jewish educational endeavors, be they inside or outside of the army, we are working against time in two different senses. First, we have to work fast to catch those who are running away from Jews and Judaism and give them a few quick shots in the arm to stop them from running. In the second place we have never had enough time allotted to our educational agencies to give our youth adequate training. Certainly a 4,000 year old culture can not be transmitted in 40 minute periods twice a week. Our problem is similar to that of the army where large numbers of men had to be trained quickly and effectively in the use of equipment, with orientation and morale-bolstering thrown in for good measure. The army had to cut corners. It introduced every technique and training aid that would speed up the educational process. Thus, audio-visual aids of every type, sound movies in particular, are utilized. It seems to me that in fighting the battle of Jewish survival we have to utilize every possible technique of sight and sound not only to crowd in as much as possible in the time allowed but also to bolster morale and keep our audience from running away. We have to work fast or else we will have none left on whom we might work. As has been repeatedly pointed out, Jews no longer ask: What kind of a Jew should I be?, but rather: Shall I remain a Jew? The momentum of the past will not carry us forever.

Utilizing the Movies

Realizing full well that there are no short cuts to knowledge, nonetheless we should develop and utilize "training aids" of every sort in Jewish education. Among the educational techniques I propose is a series of movies that would dramatize personalities and events in Jewish life. A series similar to the Eternal Light radio program could be made into effective movie shorts. Literally hundreds of other themes, historical as well as current, could be used for motion picture production. When produced on the same high level as the Eternal Light radio program they would serve a twofold purpose, viz., education in a dramatic form and bolstering Jewish morale. One recalls the telling effect the movie short "Sons of Liberty," depicting the life of Haym Salomon, had on our youth. Several dozen movie shorts each year would give us a potent instrument to sustain morale. These could be the entering wedge and motivation for more intensive training of both young and old. Without running into too much difficulty we could portray the beauty of Jewish ritual and music at its best through the medium of the talking movie. At the same time most of the scripts could be used for stage dramatization. One can already sense the wholesome effect of the Eternal Light program on large numbers of uninformed and disinterested Jews.

Utilizing Music and Other Arts

At the same time, our educational agencies have to emphasize art and music. Until now we have been embarrassed by the limited amount of material available. Even what we do have is unfamiliar to large masses of Jews. Every Chaplain in the army is supplied with Jewish song books to be used as he sees fit. These books contain a collection of Sabbath and Holiday songs as well as English Hymns, Hebrew and Yiddish Folk Songs. There is no better way of building *espirit de corps* than through group singing, yet only a very small percentage of Jewish men know more than 3 or 4 songs in the entire collection. Zionist youth groups have done the best job along these lines. However, the problem does not end there. One very effective part of our chapel service is the congregational singing. Slowly some of the melodies are becoming standardized and thus a larger group of men can participate. Would that we could increase the scope and repertoire of our congregational singing!

Here parathentically may I record a strange phenomenon. Occasionally some of our men who know how to sing turn a cold shoulder when it comes to joining a Jewish choral group but they admittedly sing at Protestant and Catholic services. I have no objection to this latter participation but I do think they ought to cultivate their own vineyard too. The answer seems to be that everything connected with the synagogue is utterly strange to them.

The Skills of Jewish Living

Were I back in a civilian congregation I would lay even greater stress on (1) the Junior Congregation, (2) familiarity with Jewish symbols and ceremonies and (3) acquisition of the "skills of Jewish living." It is a psychological axiom that we like to do the things we do well and, conversely, do well the things we like. Familiarity with the fundamentals of a Jewish worship service is basic for youth if they are to associate themselves with the synagogue as adults. There is nothing more pathetic than to watch a soldier who wants to take part and feel at home in a Jewish religious service (we are speaking of a modernized service) but has never had one iota of training for it. Many Jew-

soldiers, after attendance over a riod of time, do come to feel at home services and sense that something is king when they are unable to attend cause of military duties.

aking Judaism Visible

Reverting to the question of visual ds, one looks in vain for adequate d easily obtainable art objects, deco- tions, posters, pictures and the like th which to create and sustain the irit of the various holidays in army rroundings. One does not have to be ld that Christmas is approaching when walks into a USO or Chapel. When e walks into a JWB-USO Club or the hapel where Jewish services are held, finds no tangible symbols by which indicate the approach of Hanukkah or urim. This is true in civilian life too. here is a paucity of art materials and mbols that has to be filled in. For a inority group these visual reminders e extremely important. There is much ork to be done in developing Jewish ts and crafts.

In like measure we have to develop very technique of sight and sound to ramatize the rich ethical material that interwoven with our heritage and its ersonalities. Here, too, we may have o develop short cuts and deliver our aterial in capsule form. There is no ack of it. The problem is to get it before ver increasing numbers of our people.

he Problem of Means and Sponsorship

In the battle for Jewish survival wis- om dictates the use of modern tech- iques and up to date weapons. The pro- ram envisaged above involves a large inancial outlay. It is not impossible of ccomplishment. Perhaps no single Jew- sh institution or agency has the finances r adequate personnel at the present time o carry out a program of the sort out- ined above. Ideally speaking, a proper organization of Jewish community life in America would make such a program a reality. Subsidies for music, drama, and art work would be created. Movies would be developed and financed. With encouragement and financial backing sustained effort in all these fields would help to strengthen Jewish life.

Since we are working against time, however, we cannot wait until a properly organized community setup is achieved. Even now, several of our national agencies could combine their efforts on behalf of a program of this sort. A strong and well-financed Synagogue Council, in cooperation with our national Jewish educational agencies and the Jewish Welfare Board could undertake this work. Denominational differences should not be too big a stumbling block. Whatever agency or combination of agencies undertakes this program, it will help to insure Jewish survival and to assure itself of a place in the Jewish hall of fame. "Where there is no vision, a people casts off restraint." That is to say that, without wise guidance, morale breaks down. Were one to write a communiqué on the battle of Jewish survival, it would read thus:—"Attacked on all sides, we are plagued by many would-be deserters. Our loyal soldiers not properly oriented nor possess a strong inner desire to go on fighting. The will to live and fight as Jews must be strengthened at all costs. Matter urgent. Utmost speed called for."

True enough, our generation of Jews has been preoccupied with tremendous tasks of relief as well as with the fight against anti-Semitism, both of which require tremendous sums of money. It is a sorry state of affairs where tremendous sums can be raised for anti-defamation work through frightening Jews into giving and very little, by comparison, can be raised to bolster Jewish morale. As Jewish life is now constituted, we can

raise millions for defense but not very much to give the necessary spiritual supplies to the defenders. With each national organization sovereign and autonomous, and with no over-all governing body to allocate funds with a sense of proportion on the basis of the total picture, such conditions will continue. However, there is nothing to preclude our setting up new techniques in Jewish education except a lack of funds. We certainly do not lack the gifted personnel with the necessary brain power and creative imagination. In the words of a current song, it is high time we "accentuate the positive." Failing that, future historians will be tempted to say of us—"they fiddled while Rome burned."

Book Notes

A SCIENTIST'S PHILOSOPHY FOR OUR DAY

ON LIVING IN A REVOLUTION, by Julian Huxley. Harper and Brothers, New York and London, 1944.

IT is refreshing and helpful to find so optimistic and so socially valuable a viewpoint as is presented here, put forward primarily as the result of scientific study. Those who regard the problems of the organization of national and international society from a moral, religious, or political outlook will find their stand supported in this collection of essays by a viewpoint grounded primarily in the natural sciences. And this is important. For if morality based on religion and morality based on science point to the same solutions of our problems, there is added weight to the case for a democratic world.

This collection of essays is by one of England's most eminent scientists and thinkers. It is profound and thought-provoking, but at the same time highly readable. This is a book that is worth the time of the general reader and of the serious student of social trends.

Huxley's thesis is implied in the title, *On Living in a Revolution.* We are engaged in a war which is part of and a result of a *revolution,* a large-scale transformation of the economic, social, and political facts of our world. Geological revolutions on our planet, and revolutions in human life in pre-historic times, seldom effected radical changes in the life of any one generation, since they took place over periods of time far greater than a life-span. But the tempo of revolutions has accelerated; and we are faced today with the task of adjusting ourselves to a revolution of sudden onset and great speed. The fact of change is inevitable; the revolution is here, and its nature can be demonstrated; it remains for us to recognize it, and to try to steer the changes in desirable directions.

Reconstructionists will be interested to note the similarity to the Reconstructionist insistence that change is an inevitable fact also of *Jewish* life, and that it is wise for us to guide the change consciously toward desirable ends.

Huxley is convinced that the characteristics of the revolution have to do with greater social unity, with increasing government control over many aspects of life, with the subordination of purely economic motivation to social and ideological motives, with increasing unification of international efforts. But the revolution may be accomplished in either

two forms, in a totalitarian, brutal form of dictatorship, regimentation, cruelty ("The Wave of the Future") or a democratic, peaceful form of concern for social welfare ("The Century of the Common Man"). It is our task to see that the ship of humanity emerges from the storm of the revolution with sails set toward the latter form.

Although Huxley does not make out an iron-clad case, we can see that he is essentially right if we allow ourselves a quick retrospective glance at developments of the last decade. In the United States there have been great changes—legislation on social security, unemployment, housing, banking and exchange, labor, and international trade. But one might say that in Germany the changes have been similar, with the subordination of economic to "ideological" motives, with increasing government control over life, and with increasing international unification to the point of the virtual achievement, on a temporary basis, of a United States of Europe. The two revolutions, thought incomplete in both cases, exhibit similar trends—but they are poles apart in their forms and methods.

Huxley goes on to say that the war is already an attempt to insure that the totalitarian-brutal form of the revolution does not continue. We must make sure that the revolution take on a democratic form, with the sloughing off of concepts of economic individualism, class privilege, racial superiority, and national isolationism with its insistence on sovereign rights. Some of these were useful at one stage of man's economic and political development. Today they are nothing short of dangerous. To illustrate the techniques of democratic planning, Huxley devotes a full essay to the Tennessee Valley Authority.

This is the main thesis here presented. But worth noting are some pointed findings of science, presented in challenging, though more or less disconnected, essays: that war is a rare biological phenomenon, found only among men and ants; that when it occurs it is associated with another rare phenomenon, the amassing of property; that war, biologically speaking, is a form of "intra-specific competition," which can do the species no good and may do—war does—positive harm; that war is not an inevitable part of human life; that the state exists for the individual, and not the reverse; that there are no pure races, and that race mixture is desirable; that the nation, unlike the family, is not a natural but a man-made unit, exhibiting cultural (not hereditary) characteristics; that racialism has no scientific grounds whatever and may be assumed to be a cloak for selfish aims.

The general reader will find most challenging the essay on "Economic Man and Social Man," the preface, and the essay on "War as a Biological Phenomenon." Other essays will be of primary interest to students of biology, and students of political and social problems.

This reviewer found highly interesting —and Reconstructionists will—the essays on "Philosophy in a World at War," "Education as a Social Function," and "Thomas Henry Huxley and Julian Huxley: An Imaginary Interview." Huxley's thesis runs somewhat as follows: Ours is a *monistic* world, with life and matter constituting two manifestations of one "world-stuff." Such a world can be explained adequately by science, and no God-theory is necessary. Man is the highest form of life yet evolved, and the facts of biology seem to point to man as the only source of any future progress, since only man is capable of rational and purposeful values. Man's task then becomes the continuation of the direction of evolution and the realization of those values. His ethics need not be a

permanent and final standard; his ethics come to him naturally, are created by him in a continuing process of adaptation to his environment; we must therefore think in terms of direction, rather than standards. . . . Christian ethics, Huxley finds, are no longer essential. Although the religious impulse is strong and persistent, interest in Christianity will continue to decline unless a new theology is created, adapted to present needs.

Reconstructionists and liberal Christians will be interested in this scientist's forthright statement of the psychological normalcy of the religious impulse and will be willing to admit the inadequacy of traditional theologies, forms, and ethical emphases. As a matter of fact, Reconstructionists are engaged partly in precisely that recasting of theology for which Huxley appeals, in a form relevant to the needs of our age, and we are engaged in precisely that attempt to find the ethical emphases needed for the age of "social man." We cannot but remark on the oft-noted stress in the Hebrew prophets and the rabbinic tradition on social values and economic justice (an emphasis almost lacking in the New Testament and Christian tradition generally). Because of this it should be possible for the Jewish religion to function in close relevance to contemporary needs as a powerful factor in shaping the thinking and actions of Jews in the emerging age of social man, and as a force in the society of men.

This reviewer cannot find logical or sensible the banishment of the God-concept, accomplished by Huxley merely by stating that science is quite adequate to explain the world and that man creates his own ethics. Yet he goes on to say that the religious impulse is natural and legitimate; that every society needs its "myth" — its emotionally charged ideas; that man has a "place in the universe . . . to realize values"; that morality is linked with something outside ourselves. . . . Now these are precisely the assumptions of the religious mind. Surely there can be no advantage or logical compulsion in banishing the God-concept, when, on the basis of the same assumptions, Huxley is forced to posit a "Sacred Reality" to take its place, as he does in another volume, *Religion Without Revelation*. Psychologically man *requires* the assurance that the values he strives for are related to the nature of the physical world, and that his striving is worthwhile in that these values are within the reach of the species. There can be no purpose in substituting one term for another, equally undemonstrable in the scientist's laboratory, when the substitution scraps the whole emotional drive and spiritual power associated with faith in God. We are quite ready to admit that religion should be humanistic in its approach, and that much of the traditional description of God is irrelevant to our age; but we insist on the right to faith in a God relevant to our age and described in terms of our age and still necessary for our age.

MEYER S. KRIPKE

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specific character. In the same way, the Jew—and certainly the Jewish minister—cannot be expected to join in a service part of which is inconsistent with the tenets of his creed. If either of these proceedings is followed, inevitably a sense of something lacking or embarrassing, if not of grievance, is aroused. The proper thing is to pray as Jew or as Christian. It is also the honest thing; and honesty in religious matters is of supreme importance."